



RUSSELL AND LOWER WEST MARKET STREET

The development of Russell was coincidental with that of Old Louisville. The residential suburban expansion into Russell in the 1870s and 1880s became popular and fashionable for many of Louisville's professional classes. Russell, named for Harvey Clarence Russell, a nationally recognized black educator, is also the oldest local residential enclave for professional, middle-class blacks, and continues today as a center of black social and commercial activities.

The building stock in Russell is widely varied. The large brick Italianate and Victorian residences, which line several of the area's east-west corridors, contrast

with the smaller, frame cottages and vernacular structures on alternating streets. In both large and small scale, the area contains a wealth of architectural character found in Eastlake detailing, Victorian stained glass, and ornamental ironwork. The Russell district also contains numerous ecclesiastical structures of architectural and historical significance.

The opportunities for investment tax credit projects in Russell are abundant. Because there is a large cross-section of building types, both small- and large-scale rehabilitation projects are potentially available.

The Lower West Market Street Historic District is reminiscent of the late nineteenth-century commercial enclaves which were located in many areas of the city, where shop owners and employees lived above their places of business or in close proximity. It contains an abundance of commercial structures, built largely in the 1870s and 1880s to serve the Russell and Portland neighborhoods. Many of these retain their original first-floor facades, a rare occurrence in Louisville. During the 1880s, residential construction served as infill for the existing commercial buildings. These houses contain various decorative elements and represent various building types. Similarly, the ethnic and commercial make-up of the area was a mix of Germans, Italians, and Jews providing services ranging from undertakers to wallpaper hangers. The Lower West Market Street district is an important architectural and historical resource, representing a late nineteenth-century working-class area.

Little rehabilitation has occurred in recent years in this district, and there appears to be a high turnover rate of commercial tenants. However, the increased activity in Russell is providing a new market for the commercial activities of West Market Street, and developers are beginning to take a second look at the potential here. Many of the buildings are in very poor condition, but stable, the perfect situation for a tax incentive project.



Nearly every feature of this grand Victorian residence remains intact. Its sensitive rehabilitation will be an asset to the Lower West Market Street District.



While this turn-of-the-century commercial building is non-contributing due to the application of aluminum siding, it is otherwise intact. Removal of the siding which only appears on the front, would greatly improve the streetscape.